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Illinois
Environmental
Protection Agency

Office of Chemical Safety
2200 Churchill Road
P.O. Box 19276
Springfield, IL 62794-9276

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HEALTH AND SAFETY UNIT



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OFFICE OF CHEMICAL SAFETY



Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

What is Industrial Hygiene?

Industrial Hygiene is the science of recognition, evaluation, and control of those environmental factors or stresses — chemical, physical, biological, and ergonomic — that may result in sickness, impaired health, or significant discomfort to employees or residents of the community. The Safety and Health Program uses industrial hygiene techniques and training to protect the health and welfare of IEPA employees.

How are IEPA employees prepared for their particular work?

Training Programs

Training is critical to safe work operations. The Health and Safety Staff prepares and presents a variety of training seminars for Agency personnel. These include basic and refresher courses for hazardous waste site workers, and training classes for emergency response personnel meeting U.S. EPA and DOL requirements, and seminars for Worker Right-to-Know.

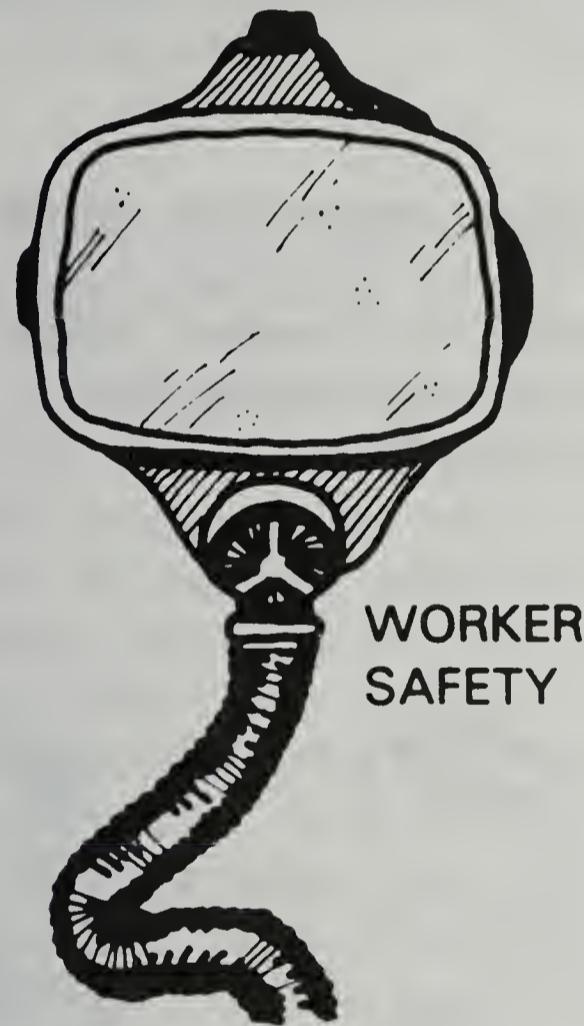
Occupational Medical Monitoring

Physical examinations are another way of identifying potential exposure problems or employees at risk because of existing health problems. The Health and Safety Staff assists Agency field staff in designing and in-

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interpreting a medical monitoring program for employees who are potentially exposed to toxic or hazardous chemicals at waste sites.

A licensed medical facility performs medical exams under contract to IEPA. They review the results of each annual physical for significant changes or other indications of health problems.



How is safety ensured during hazardous waste activities?

Safety is ensured by the following:

Site Safety Plans

Site Safety Plans establish industrial hygiene and safety requirements for

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hazardous waste site investigations and cleanup operations. These plans include:

- A safety and health risk analysis for each site task and operation.
- Personal Protective Equipment to be used by employees for each of the site tasks and operations.
- Frequency and type of air monitoring, personal monitoring, and environmental sampling techniques and instrumentation to be used.
- Decontamination procedures.
- Contingency Plan for safe and effective responses to emergencies.
- Key Personnel responsible for site safety and health.
- Site control measures including designated work areas and evacuation routes.
- Standard Operating Procedures for specialized tasks.

Safety Audits

Employees must apply training, site safety plans, and regulatory requirements to actual work situations. The Health and Safety Staff verifies this application process through field performance and safety audits and reports deficiencies to the division managers and line supervisors.

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Personal Exposure Monitoring

In order to determine whether recommended personal protective equipment and safe work practices have been sufficient to protect the employees potentially exposed to chemicals, it is necessary to take representative samples of the air at work sites and identify the quality and type of chemicals actually present. To determine exposure levels to atmospheric contaminants and measure possible physical stresses, the Health and Safety Staff uses either direct reading instruments or laboratory analytical methods.

What other health and safety programs are conducted at the Agency?

Worker Right-to-Know

Illinois' Worker Right-to-Know law requires employers to inform their employees of hazards associated with handling chemicals in the workplace.

The safety staff maintains copies of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for listed chemicals routinely handled by Agency employees. The Health and Safety Staff presents annual training seminars for potentially exposed employees to explain how to read a MSDS and how to handle chemicals safely in the workplace.

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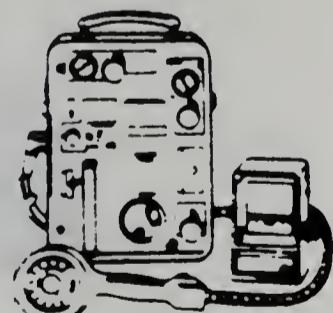
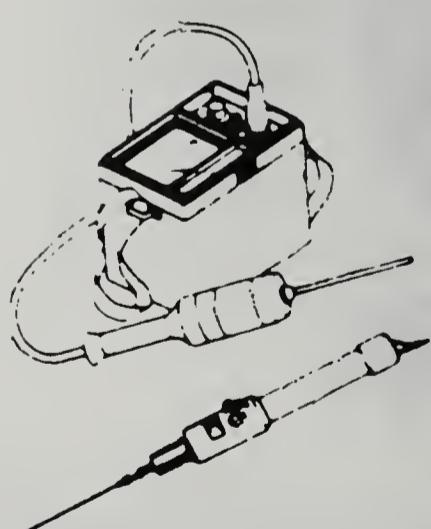
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Illinois Health and Safety Act

The Health and Safety Act requires state agencies to provide a workplace free from recognized hazards that could cause death or serious physical harm to their employees. It incorporates all of the Federal OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) regulations covering worker health and safety into requirements for state employees. The Health and Safety Staff evaluate Agency activities and recommend safe work practices or other controls to protect employees from workplace hazards.

For further information contact:

Office of Chemical Safety
Health and Safety Unit
217/785-0830.



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